

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 8526

EXDIS

EO: 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR RH UK

SUBJ: RHODESIAN CONFERENCE: SMITH'S OPENING STATEMENT OCTOBER 29

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF STATEMENT DELIVERED BY IAN SMITH AT OPENING SESSION OF RHODESIA CONFERENCE MORNING OCT 29. STATEMENT HAS NOT YET BEEN RELEASED TO PRESS BUT BRITISH EXPECT THAT SMITH DELEGATION WILL DO SO THIS AFTERNOON AT PRESS CONFERENCE VAN DER BYL HAS CALLED.

BEGIN TEXT:

MR CHAIRMAN: I WILL NOT DETAIN YOU FOR MORE THAN A MINUTE. PERHAPS I SHOULD COMMENCE BY COMMISERATING WITH YOU AND YOUR GOVERNMENT AT SOME OF THE INSULTS HURLED AT YOU BY THE SPEAKERS BEFORE ME. I WOULD LIKE TO SAY THAT I BELIEVE THIS KIND OF THING IS UNCALLED FOR WHEN ONE CONSIDERS BRITAIN'S RECORD, NOT ONLY IN RHODESIA BUT IN MANY OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD IN SPREADING CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION. WE OURSELVES HAVE HAD OUR DIFFERENCES OF OPINION WITH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT FROM TIME TO TIME BUT, WHEN I COMPARE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WITH THE ORGANISATIONS ON BEHALF OF WHICH SOME OF THE AFRICAN LEADERS SPOKE HERE, BRITIAN CAN ONLY BE REGARDED AS A PARAGON OF VIRTUE. I AND MY GOVERNMENT, OF COURSE, WERE NOT EXCLUDED FROM SOME OF THE UNFORTUNATE COMMENTS MADE, BUT WHEN YOU HAVE LIVED IN AFRICA AS LONG AS I HAVE, IT IS LIKE WATER OFF A DUCK'S BACK.

I DO WANT TO ASSURE YOU FOR THE RECORD THAT, AS FAR AS SOME
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OF THE ACCUSATIONS MADE AGAINST THE RHODESIAN SECURITY FORCES ARE

CONCERNED, WE HAVE HAD THESE COMPLAINTS BEFORE AND EXHAUSTIVE INVESTIGATIONS HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT IN ORDER TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER THERE IS ANY TRUTH IN THEM. THESE INVESTIGATIONS HAVE PROVED CONCLUSIVELY TO US THAT THE ACCUSATIONS ARE A COMPLETE PACK OF LIES. HOWEVER, THERE ARE FACTS AND AMPLE EVIDENCE TO SUBSTANTIATE ATROCIOUS ACTS BY THE TERRORISTS AGAINST RHODESIAN CIVILIANS. THESE HAVE BEEN PUBLICISED AND MANY RHODESIANS, MAINLY BLACK, HAVE BEEN MAIMED BY BARBAROUS ACTIONS AT THE HANDS OF THE TERRORISTS. I CHALLENGE THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE ACCUSED THE SECURITY FORCES OF SIMILAR ATROCITIES TO SUBSTANTIATE THEIR CLAIMS - TO DATE THEY HAVE NOT SUCCEEDED IN DOING SO. THEREFORE, MR. CHAIRMAN, I WOULD SAY TO YOU THAT WHAT WE HAVE HEARD SO FAR AMOUNTS TO LITTLE MORE THAN UNSUBSTANTIATED VERBIAGE.

MY FORMAL CONTRIBUTION THIS MORNING WILL BE SHORT. LAST MONTH I ANNOUNCED ON BEHALF OF MY GOVERNMENT RHODESIA'S ACCEPTANCE OF THE JOINT ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS TO SETTLE THE CONSTITUTIONAL FUTURE OF RHODESIA WHICH WERE PUT TO US BY THE AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE. THE PROPOSALS PROVIDE FOR AN EARLY MEETING BETWEEN GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES AND RHODESIAN AFRICANS TO DETERMINE THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE AS THE FIRST STEP IN ESTABLISHING THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT. ACCORDINGLY, THE GOVERNMENT DELEGATION IS HERE TODAY IN A GENUINE AND SINCERE ATTEMPT TO IMPLEMENT THE PROPOSALS AND TO CARRY OUT OUR UNDERTAKINGS. IT IS IN THE INTERESTS, NOT ONLY OF RHODESIA, BUT ALSO OF THE FREE WORLD THAT RHODESIA SHOULD BE REINSTATED IN ITS RIGHTFUL POSITION AS A FULL MEMBER OF THE FREE WORLD. IT IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT THAT STABLE AND GOOD GOVERNMENT IN RHODESIA IS ENSURED. THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS WHICH WE HAVE ACCEPTED MAKE THIS POSSIBLE AND THE RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT WISH TO PROCEED WITH THEIR IMPLEMENTATION FORTHWITH. THE RHODESIAN DELEGATION IS READY TO PLAY ITS PART IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT SUCCESS IS ACHIEVED AT THIS IMPORTANT CONFERENCE.

END TEXT
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